

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 OES-09 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/114 W

-----036782 241401Z /46

R 241326Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7821
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 04791

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, GE
SUBJ: GDR AUTHORITIES REMOVE EDITORIAL BOARD OF
LITERARY JOURNAL

REF: (A) BERLIN 3604, (B) BERLIN 4050

1. ACCORDING TO WELL-INFORMED EMBASSY CONTACTS, GDR
AUTHORITIES HAVE RECENTLY REMOVED THE ENTIRE EDITORIAL
BOARD OF "TEMPERAMENTE," A QUARTERLY JOURNAL WHICH
PUBLISHES SHORT STORIES AND POETRY. THE REASONS FOR THE
ACTION EVIDENTLY STEM FROM THE EXPERIMENTAL CHARACTER
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OF A NUMBER OF RECENT ITEMS PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL
AND THE FACT THAT CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE TOUCHED ON
SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUES. THE JOURNAL OFFICES ARE
CURRENTLY IN THE HANDS OF PERSONNEL FROM THE MINISTRY
OF CULTURE AND THE FREE GERMAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION.

2. ACCORDING TO A YOUNG EAST GERMAN WRITER OF SCIENCE

FICTION (AND CONFIRMED BY A MEMBER OF THE POLISH EMBASSY), A DECISION WAS MADE TO CRACK DOWN ON "TEMPERAMENTE" BECAUSE ITS EDITORIAL POLICIES HAD BECOME TOO LENIENT AND BECAUSE THE EDITORIAL BOARD WAS ENCOURAGING EXCESSIVE EXPERIMENTATION IN THE CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH IT SOLICITED FOR RECENT EDITIONS. THE EDITORIAL BOARD WAS RELATIVELY YOUNG AND INTERESTED IN ENCOURAGING YOUNG, AND AS YET UNDISCOVERED, EAST GERMAN SHORT STORY WRITERS AND POETS AND IN TRANSLATING THE WORKS OF AVANT-GARDE WRITERS FROM OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE JOURNAL DID NOT REQUIRE APPROVAL FOR MATERIAL PUBLISHED IN EACH EDITION BECAUSE IT POSSESSED A GENERAL LICENSE FOR ITS ACTIVITIES FROM THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE. HOWEVER, THE EDITORIAL POLICIES HAD EVIDENTLY BECOME OVERLY BOLD AND THE ENTIRE BOARD WAS REMOVED ON JULY 3. OUR POLISH SOURCE CLAIMS THAT THIS ACTION WAS DIRECTED BY THE SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE BUT HE HAS NOT PROVIDED SUBSTANTIATION FOR THIS CLAIM.

3. THE DIRECTION OF THE JOURNAL IS CURRENTLY IN THE HANDS OF OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FREE GERMAN YOUTH (FDJ) AND ITS HOUSE ORGAN, "JUNGE WELT." IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THIS ARRANGEMENT IS TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT OR IN FACT WHETHER THERE WILL BE ANY FURTHER ISSUES OF "TEMPERAMENTE." THE CURRENT STAFF, WHETHER INTERIM OR NOT, IS REFUSING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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REQUESTS OF SEVERAL "TEMPERAMENTE" CONTRIBUTORS FOR THE RETURN OF THEIR MANUSCRIPTS, WITHOUT ANY SUBSTANTIVE EXPLANATION OR RATIONALE.

4. THE FORMER EDITORIAL BOARD HAS EVIDENTLY NOT DISBANDED, BUT IS CONTINUING TO COLLECT MANUSCRIPTS AND TO SOLICIT CONTRIBUTIONS AND TRANSLATIONS. WHAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONTINUING EFFORT MAY BE IS NOT CLEAR. THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING A LITERARY JOURNAL IN THE GDR WITHOUT OFFICIAL SANCTION SEEMS REMOTE TO SAY THE LEAST. IT MAY BE THAT THE FORMER BOARD DOES NOT ACCEPT ITS DISMISSAL AS FINAL AND HAS SOME EXPECTATION OF RETURNING TO THE "TEMPERAMENTE" OFFICES AFTER MAKING SOME KIND OF ARRANGEMENT WITH THE AUTHORITIES.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE SEEN SEVERAL INDICATIONS IN OFFICIAL PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON CULTURAL POLICY AND IN THE FIRM HAND TAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH THE WRITERS CONFERENCE (REFTELS) THAT THE GDR MAY BE IMPOSING STRICTER LIMITS ON ARTISTIC EXPRESSION. THE WELL-KNOWN WRITER AND SINGER, BETTINA WEGENAR, RECENTLY TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT SHE BELIEVED THE GDR WAS ENTERING A NEW

CYCLE (OF TWO YEARS) OF RESTRICTIONS ON LITERARY
EXPRESSION IN WHICH IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR MATERIAL
ON THE POLITICAL BORDERLINE TO BE PUBLISHED. AT THE SAME
TIME, TWO NEW BOOKS HAVE APPEARED QUITE RECENTLY DEALING
WITH DAILY LIFE IN THE GDR WHICH APPEAR TO BE BEYOND THE
BORDERLINE. ONE, CALLED "TOD AM MEER" BY WERNER
HEIDVCZEK, MAY HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM THE SHELVES.
THE OTHER, CALLED "ES GEHT SEINEN GANG" BY ERICH LOEST,
IS AS FAR AS WE KNOW COMING OUT IN A SMALL SECOND EDITION.
WHILE THE EVIDENCE IS TOO LIMITED TO MAKE ANY GENERALIZA-
TIONS, THE ACTION AGAINST THE "TEMPERAMENTE" BOARD MAY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BERLIN 04791

BE A SIGN THAT SUCH A POLICY IS BEING IMPLEMENTED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE, MAGAZINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BERLIN04791
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780303-0339
Format: TEL
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BERLIN 3604, 78 BERLIN 4050
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1900928
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GDR AUTHORITIES REMOVE EDITORIAL BOARD OF LITERARY JOURNAL
TAGS: PGOV, GC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1bcd676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014